11th March 1947]

THE HON. SRI B. VENKATARATNAM :—" The reply to this was already given in my answer but I will state it once more. Government thought that this being a virgin forest, having no special facilities like roads and other necessary conveniences, it was profitable for them to give the contract to a private person or a Syndicate which has got all the materials for the purpose, namely, technical staff, etc., to exploit this virgin forest."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" Is it the opinion of the Government that there are no such contractors in Malabar where timber operations have been going on for generations? "

THE HON. SRI B. VENKATARATNAM :—" Yes, Sir. One other company applied originally and subsequently, the Chief Conservator reported that that company went into liquidation and then another company applied and in that case also, the Chief Conservator of Forests reported that it had not got the requisite capacity to work the forest."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" May I know, Sir, whether in view of the various conjectures in this House and in the other House, will the Government issue a Press Communiqué explaining all the circumstances under which they had to give up this system of calling for tenders and giving the contract to the Hope Timber Syndicate? "

THE HON. SRI B. VENKATARATNAM :—" Government are not responsible for conjectures made by outsiders."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" May I know who form this Hope Timber Syndicate? "

THE HON. SRI B. VENKATARATNAM :—" Notice, Sir."

K. UPPI SAHIB BAHADUR :—" May I know, Sir, whether this Hope Timber Syndicate had any previous experience of timber trade? "

THE HON. SRI B. VENKATARATNAM :—" I have already stated it in my reply."

Principles governing priority to permits for the purchase of new cars.

* 103 Q.—SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO : Will the Hon. the Minister for Motor Transport and Food be pleased to state—

(*a*) the principles governing priority in regard to permits for the purchase of new cars;

(*b*) whether what is known as ' essentiality ' has been adopted as the main consideration; and if so, how ' essentially ' has been defined;

(*c*) whether the Government themselves have at any time given instructions to the Provincial Motor Transport Controller in some cases to give priority to certain individuals; and if so whether it was on the ground of ' essentiality ';

(*d*) whether appeal lies to Government from the orders of the Provincial Motor Transport Controller in regard to permits for the purchase of new cars; and

(*e*) whether the Government will place on the table of the House a list of priorities prepared for guidance of the Provincial Motor Transport Controller?

THE HON. SRI R. RAGHAVA MENON :—" (*a*) The general principle observed is that those in most need of a car should be given priority. Preference is given to those who need a car, but have no car or are willing to place their car at the disposal of the Provincial Motor Transport Controller for sale at a price calculated on the basis of the Used Motor Vehicles Control Order.

" (*b*) The answer is in the affirmative. No specific definition of essentiality has been laid down but the principle is as given in answer to (*a*).

" (*c*) Government issued instructions in some cases to give priority to certain individuals based on grounds of essentiality.

" (*d*) No appeal as such lies to the Government, but it is open to Government to review any case of refusal.

" (*e*) No list of priorities has been prescribed. Each case is decided on merits."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" Now that the permit system has gone, I do not propose to pursue the question by putting any supplementaries."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" In fact, I wanted to ask the hon. member whether he would put the question at all."

Pension to retired peons.

* 104 *Q.*—SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO : Will the Hon. the Prime Minister be pleased to state with reference to answer to question No. 51 answered on 11th September 1946, whether the Government have under consideration the question allowing peons who have retired from service before the decision of Government to sanction half their emoluments as pension was announced, to draw their pensions also on the same basis?

THE HON. SRI T. PRAKASAM :—" The question referred to is not under the consideration of the Government.

" According to the existing orders, the concession of pension equal to half the average emoluments of the peons has effect from 1st January 1946, that is, it does not apply to those who retired prior to 1st January 1946."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" May I know, Sir, in view of the fact that the amount of pension is Rs. 6 per mensem whatever might have been the salary the peon was drawing at the time of retirement and as increased emoluments in the shape of pension are available to those who retire after 1st April 1946, why